

# Office of Research and Development Forms a Homeland Security Research Center

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On September 24, 2002, EPA Administrator Christie Whitman announced the formation of the EPA's Homeland Security Research Center headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Center, as part of the Office of Research and Development (ORD), manages, coordinates and supports a wide variety of homeland security research and technical assistance efforts. Research at the Center will focus on developing methods to clean up contaminated buildings (the Safe Building Program), protecting the Nation's drinking water supply (the Water Protection Program), and improving risk assessment techniques (the Rapid Risk Assessment Program).

The Center provides the EPA and ORD with a management structure that ensures effective design and oversight of research, provides clear lines of communication, and facilitates interaction with EPA Program Offices and Regions, other federal agencies, the private sector, and research partners. By bringing together a critical mass of research talent, the Center will integrate and unify ORD homeland security research and provide an easily identifiable entity for communication and coordination. EPA's Homeland Security Research Center, motivated by the roadmap set forth in the EPA's Strategic Plan for Homeland Security, will ensure rapid and improved production, review, clearance, and distribution of ORD homeland security research products.

## Mission Areas

Research on homeland security will develop the scientific foundations to provide decision makers with the understanding and tools necessary to prevent or manage a range of potential threats. Research and development efforts will focus on:

- Evaluating, characterizing and developing tools that can be used to detect, contain, decontaminate and manage hazardous chemical and biological materials purposefully introduced into structures, drinking water systems or wastewater systems,
- Conducting rapid risk assessments of existing or potential terrorist events (e.g., World Trade Center) to accurately characterize risks to the public and emergency response personnel in a timely manner, and
- Providing advice, guidance and scientific expertise to emergency response personnel, decision makers and government officials on homeland security issues.



## Products

EPA's homeland security research activities will produce quality products usable by the public as quickly and efficiently as possible. Because of the immediacy of homeland security issues, staffing of the Center will be accomplished using existing expertise from within ORD. In addition, ORD is working with other federal agencies, academia, and the private sector to incorporate all available expertise and technological advancements into the knowledge and strategy of the Center.

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**For additional information, visit the Homeland Security Research Center's internet website at: <http://www.epa.gov/ordnhsrc>**